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Rumania

Laundries/Brief Cases/Wrist and Pocket Watches

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1. "Laundries: [See Enclosure A, Organization Chart of State and Private Laundries]. Laundry rates for various items of clothing, are given below in three columns: State Laundries, ('Lucrative'), Cooperatives, Laundries, and Private Laundries:

	State	LSI Cooperative	Private
one suit, cleaning and pressing	35	38	40
trousers, cleaning and pressing	17	20	22
one man's jacket, cleaning and pressing	20	22	25
man's night-shirt, cleaning and pressing	20	22	25
pajamas, cleaning and pressing, per pr.	15	17	20
raincoat ('Balonside') cleaning and pressing	30	32.50	36
water-proofing of a raincoat	10	12	15
Spring of Fall coat ('Pardesiu'), cleaning and pressing	25	28	30
winter coat, cleaning and pressing	30	32	35
dress, cleaning and pressing	20	22	25
tailleur, cleaning and pressing	35	38	40
potticoat, cleaning and pressing	15	17	20
blouses and shirts, washing and pressing, each	8	10	10
dyeing, one blouse	25	?	?

State laundry prices are lower because chemical supplies are purchased at official State prices. Cooperative laundries are subject to very strict governmental supervision, for they operate under the Ministry of Cooperatives, and, indirectly, under the 'Centrocop'. Their chemical supplies (from the 'Centrocop') are slightly more expensive, and so prices show an increase over

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those of State Laundries. The private laundries, whose prices are higher than either State or Cooperative Laundries, purchase most of their materials on the black market. In addition, a private laundry owner, considered to be in the category of small businessmen, is very heavily taxed by the State, and, thus, his prices must be higher. Despite this, people prefer private laundries which work more carefully and more quickly than the others. When clothing items are brought to any laundry, no identification is required. The customer gives his name and address, which is written on a receipt, the original of which is given the customer, while the copy remains at the laundry to collect laundered clothes; an individual need only show his receipt. In private laundries can be done in five days. State and Cooperative Laundries require a minimum of two weeks, and buttons, etc. are often missing on cleaned clothes.

2. "Brief cases: the following persons still carry brief cases:

- a. In the workers' category, only a 'instalatori' (plumber) or an electrician carry brief cases. Brief cases are old and made either of leather (various colors) or strong cloth. They are used to carry the worker's tools.
- b. Money-collectors ('instalatori') from the Finance Sections of the People's Boards, and money collectors from the Communal Water and Electric Power Enterprises, who carry both money and registries; civil and uniformed Militia agents from the Militia Economic Control Service. This group carries a normal size brief case, of leather (calf), either dark-brown, black or brick-red, worn out, but usually cleaner than those in a., above.
- c. employees of various Cooperatives and Ministries in Bucharest; brief cases are the same as above, but in better condition.
- d. physicians normally carry a doctor's 'trousse', in dark blue, black, or dark-brown leather, sized 25 x 15 by 5. They also carry, but less often, a normal sized brief case of dark-brown or black leather; in either case, the brief case is in excellent condition. In fact, a doctor can easily be recognized from his dress, etc.
- e. attorneys-at-law also carry regular, but worn, leather brief cases, dark-brown or black. The condition of the brief case, in this instance, depends upon the attorney and his clients.
- f. professors and elementary school teachers carry the same type of brief case as mentioned in e., above.
- g. High Government officials, Directors of State Enterprises, and the so-called 'lectori politici' (political readers), carry a regular size brief case of dark-brown or black leather, in excellent condition.
- h. private business men, still active, carry a brief case like those in b., above.

(Money is carried only by persons referred to in b., above (except for postmen, whose wallets are the typical leather ones used in any country). Citizens carry large amounts of money at the beginning of each month when payment of State pensions is made directly by the postman to the pensioner.)

3. "Billfolds, Wallets, Money and Documents: In Rumania nowadays, only about 25% of the population carry a billfold or wallet. Of this 25%, the Rumanian 'Portofel', which is carried in the right inside pocket of the jacket, is carried by the following persons: private business men, Directors of State

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Enterprises and Cooperatives, PWT Party members (Directors, Secretaries, etc.) physicians, attorneys-at-law, professors, and a small number of University students. These persons carry an ID Card, and other documents (including Military Reserve Corps cards), and cash amounting to anywhere from 300 to 1000 Lei. (The highest denomination banknote in circulation is 100 Lei; below that, is the 25 Lei, 10 Lei, 5 Lei, 3 Lei, and 1 Lei note. Bani are of nickel, and in denominations of .25, .10, .05, .03, .01.) The remaining 75% of the population, including workers and low ranking employees, do not carry a wallet. The documents carried by this group include the ID Card, Trade Unions Card, and the military document (I do not recall the name of this document, which was given a new name recently). In most cases, these documents are carried in a cellophane case, called 'Tipia', and in and among the papers might be found a banknote of 100 Lei, at the most. Actually a 25 Lei banknote, or, in the case of workers, small currency in nickel, is more common. A large amount of money found in the possession of an individual who cannot explain its origin, might lead to suspicion- even as a result of a so-called 'Razie' (check of ID papers on the streets). It is also quite common to see people carrying their documents in their pockets without a cellophane case. Wallets are of leather, usual size, brown (most common), black, or brick-red. A regular leather wallet, sold in an I.C.S. Textila State Store is priced from 60 to 90 Lei, depending on the shape. Leather wallets are also sold at the Roma State Stores which feature, as well, Nylon [nylon?] wallets priced at approximately 150 Lei each; but these are rarely available, and are not even among the common people; physicians and similar privileged groups carry them.

- b. Watches: All kinds of watches are sold in private watch-makers shops, (called 'Cesornicarii') which are small tradesmen shops. These shops are not permitted to deal in watches, but only to repair them. In spite of this, of course, they do sell watches secretly, and to reliable persons. Watches sold are old ones, in new cases. New watches are sold only in the following State Stores:

- a. I.C.S. 'Victoria' on Victorei Street
- b. I.C.S. 'Ruceesti' on Victorei Street
- c. I.C.S. 'Centrala Textila', opposite the Main Post Office.

Watches are on sale only occasionally. For example: last year [1953], at the time of the IVth Youth Festival, Swiss watches were imported and sold from time to time (after the closing of the Festival); and State Stores gave priority to persons in the field of labor (and, naturally, PWT Party members and high State Enterprise officials), who received from their respective State Institutions a certificate ('Adverinta') authorizing the sale. Stakhanovites and persons awarded the 'Order of Labor' medal got top priority after the high PWT Party officials. On these occasions, the following makes were on sale, priced as indicated below:

	LEI
a. 'Movado' wrist watch, nickel, each	1,250.00
b. 'Tellus' wrist watch, nickel, each	900.00
c. 'Titus' wrist watch, nickel, each	750.00
d. 'Universal' wrist watch, nickel, each	650.00

Nowadays owning a wrist watch of the kind above, is considered a luxury. An old type nickel pocket watch, even an 'Omega', 'Wasscop-Patent', 'Cyma' or 'Tellus', is less suspicious, but not to possess a wrist watch, or any kind of watch, is best. Very, very rarely does the common man or the worker have one, as most do not have the opportunity of making such a purchase; many have sold their watches for cash. Attorneys-at-law, and other persons mentioned above (paragraph 2, c., d., e., f. (less), g., and h.) may be found in possession of a wrist watch.

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[Enclosure: a: Organizational Chart of State, Cooperatives, and Private Laundries.]

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